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Message Text

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ACTION AF-07

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SS-15 USIA-06 /072 W
---------- 118936
R 261310Z NOV 74
FM AMEMBASSY CAPE TOWN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4207
INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
AMCONSUL DURBAN
AMEMBASSY GABORONE
AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG
AMEMBASSY LAGOS
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MASERU
AMEMBASSY MBABANE
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
USUN NEW YORK 914
AMEMBASSY BLANTYRE
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 CAPE TOWN 0818

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, WA, SF
SUBJECT: ASSESSMENT OF CHANGES IN NAMIBIA

1. BEGIN SUMMARY. AF/S DIRECTOR O'NEILL AND EMBASSY'S POL COUNSELOR TALKED WITH SEVERAL WELL-INFORMED SOURCES IN WINDHOEK DURING VISIT NOVEMBER 20-22. INPRESSIONS FROM THESE TALKS ARE THAT (A) SWA NATIONAL PARTY, DIRECTED BY PRETORIA, IS EMBARKED ON PROGRAM OF CHANGE, BUT WHERE IT IS LEADING IS UNCLEAR; (B) SPECIFIC PROGRAM NOT YET WORKED OUT, BUT, FEARFUL OF WHITE RESISTANCE, NAT LEADERS SAY THEY MUST MOVE SLOWLY AND CAUTIOUSLY; (C) BECAUSE SOME BLACKS DISTRUST WHITES' MOTIVES
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AND OTHERS ARE DIVIDED AS TO WHO SHOULD REPRESENT THEM,

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PROCESS OF SELECTING BONA FIDE REPRESENTATIVES FOR MULTIRACIAL TALKS WILL BE FRAUGHT WITH DIFFICULTIES; (D) WHITES INSIST THAT WHATEVER SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT EVENTUATES IT MUST PROVIDE FOR ETHNIC DIFFERENCES AND FOR PROTECTION OF EACH GROUP'S "IDENTITY;" (E) ALTHOUGH WHITES STILL FAVOR IDEA OF FEDERATION OR CONFEDERATION OF SOUTHERN GROUPS, THEY ARE WILLING CONSIDER UNITARY STATE, BUT NOT ON ONE-MAN, ONE VOTE BASIS; AND (F) IN THIS, THEY ARE ENCOURAGED BY FACT MANY BLACKS FEAR OVAMBO DOMINATION AND THEREFORE LEAN TOWARD FEDERAL CONCEPT. WHITES' ATTEMPTS TO KEEP CHANGE WITHIN CERTAIN BOUNDS MAKES IT MOST UNLIKELY--BARRING BEHIND-THE-SCENES NEGOTIATIONS-- THAT SAG WILL WIN APPROVAL OF UN OR OAU AS LONG AS UN AND OAU CONTINUE THEIR UNEQUIVOCAL SUPPORT OF SWAPO AND SWAPO MAINTAINS ITS OPPOSITION TO ANY SOLUTION LESS THAN MAJORITY-RULED UNITARY STATE WITH SWAPO PLAYING DOMINANT ROLE. END SUMMARY.

2. IN SWA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY NOVEMBER 20, DIRK MUDGE, SENIOR MEMBER OF ASSEMBLY'S EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND NATIONAL PARTY POLITICIAN THROUGH WHOM PRIME MINISTER VORSTER IS ORCHESTRATING MOVES TOWARD CHANGE IN NAMIBIA, INTRODUCED MOTION CALLING FOR "VARIOUS POPULATION GROUPS" IN SWA TO SELECT REPRESENTATIVES TO MEET FOR DELIBERATIONS ON TERRITORY'S FUTURE. MOTION NOTED DISTINCTIVENESS OF EACH GROUP AND STATED EACH HAD INHERENT RIGHT TO LIVE IN SWA AND TO ENTRENCH ITS LANGUAGE, TRADITIONS, AND CULTURE. DURING ENSUING DISCUSSION IN ASSEMBLY, MOTION'S BACKERS SAID THAT THOSE APARTHEID MEASURES WHICH CAUSE FRICTION SHOULD BE ABOLISHED, BUT THAT THE"EXISTING ORDER SHOULD NOT BE THROWN OVERBOARD." SINCE NATIONAL PARTY HOLDS ALL 18 SEATS IN ASSEMBLY, MOTION'S PASSAGE IS ASSURED, BUT WHAT WILL COME IN ITS WAKE IS FAR FROM CLEAR.

3. PRETORIA WANTS TO REMOVE NAMIBIAN MILLSTONE FROM ITS NECK, BUT VORSTER AND MUDGE ARE LOOKING FOR SOLUTION WHICH WILL AVOID SWAPO TAKEOVER, PROVIDE FOR INTERNAL STABILITY, AND PROTECT WHITES. BECAUSE OF THIS AND BECAUSE THEY WORRY ABOUT WHITE RESISTANCE TO CHANGE IN STATUS QUO, THERE ARE LIMITS TO HOW FAR AND HOW FAST THEY PREPARED TO GO NOW.

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4. THERE SEEMS TO BE LONG HARD ROAD AHEAD, ALTHOUGH TIMETABLE FOR INDEPENDENCE APPARENTLY HAS BEEN SCALED DOWN FROM TEN TO LESS THAN FIVE YEARS (MUDGE SAID, "TWO, THREE OR FOUR YEARS"). THE FIRST STEP, GETTING REPRESENTATIVE GROUP TOGETHER FOR INITIAL MULTIRACIAL CONSULTATIONS, WILL BE DIFFICULT. WHITES INSIST THAT MULTIPLICITY OF POLITICAL PARTIES, SOME OF WHICH REPRESENT ONLY HANDFUL OF PEOPLE, PRECLUDES PARTICIPATION OF PARTIES IN TALKS. THIS OPPOSED

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BY SOME BLACK POLITICAL ORGANIZATIONS, INCLUDING NAMIBIAN NATIONAL CONVENTION (NNC), WHICH IS INSISTING IT MUST BE REPRESENTED. NNC'S CHIEF CLEMENS KAPUUO TOLD US HE FAVOR IDEA OF TALKS AND HOPES SOME KIND OF COMPROMISE ON REPRESENTATION CAN BE REACHED.

5. ALTHOUGH SOME GROUPS, E.G., KAVANGOS, WILLING AND ABLE TO PARTICIPATE IN ACCORDANCE WITH WHITE GUIDELINES, OTHERS, E.G., DAMARAS, ARE DIVIDED AMONGST THEMSELVES AS TO WHETHER TAKE PART AND, IF SO, HOW TO CHOOSE REPRESENTATIVES. WHITES LIKE MUDGE AND BILLY MARAIS, PRIME MINISTER VORSTER'S "OFFICIAL REPRESENTATIVE" IN SWA, SAY THEY ARE PERPLEXED BY THIS PROBLEM, FOR THEY WANT TO SEE EACH ETHNIC GROUP SELECT BONA FIDE REPRESENTATIVES. OTHERWISE TALKS WILL BE LABLED AS JUST ANOTHER CONVOCATION OF SAG STOOGES, AS HAPPENDED TO PM'S ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR SWA.

6. SWAPO AND OVAMBOS CONTINUE TO CONSTITUTE A MAJOR, PERHAPS THE MAJOR, PROBLEM FOR WHITES AND POSSIBLY FOR OTHER BLACKS IN NAMIBIA. SWAPO BOYCOTT OF OWAMBO ELECTION IN JANUARY WILL ENSURE THAT SAG-SUPPORTING OWAMBO GOVERNMENT LED BY CHIEF PHILEMON ELIFAS WILL BE RETURNED TO POWER. (PRESENT OWAMBO GOVERNMENT, WHICH WILL MAINTAIN ITS 35 APPOINTED MEMBERS OF 77-MEMBER LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, NEEDS TO WIN ONLY 4 OF 42 ELECTED SEATSSTO RETAIN CONTROL.) WITHOUT SWAPO'S PARTICIPATION, OBVIOUSLY THE MULTIRACIAL TALKS AND WHATEVER FLOWS FROM THEM WILL BE REGARDED AS ILLIGITIMATE AND MEANINGLESS BY OAU AND UN.

7. MUDGE AND THOSE WHITES WHO SUPPORT WHAT HE AND VORSTER HOPE TO ACHIEVE IN SWA, ARE DETERMINED NOT TO BE DETERRED BY WHAT THEY REGARD AS SWAPO INTRANSIGENCE. THEY INSIST SWAPO IS SUPPORTED ALMOST EXCLUSIVELY BY OVAMBOS AND THAT CONFIDENTIAL

IT HAS NO HONEST CLAIM TO SPEAK FOR ALL OF NAMIBIA. (WHILE THIS GENERALLY ACCEPTED BY MOST OBSERVERS IN NAMIBIA, GERMAN CONSUL IN WINDHOEK, LEONHARD KREMER, BELIEVES SWAPO'S FOLLOWING IS GROWING AMONG NON-OVAMBOS, PRINCIPALLY AMONG YOUTHS DISENCHANTED WITH OLDER LEADERS LIKE KAPUUO.) BE THAT AS IT MAY, MUDGE AND MARAIS ARE PLAYING UPON OTHER GROUPS' FEARS OF OVAMBO (SWAPO) DOMINATION. KAPUUO, FOR ONE, TOLD US THAT IF SWAPO AND OAU CONTINUE TO INSIST THAT SWAPO REPRESENTS ALL BLACKS IN SWA, THEN REST OF GROUPS WILL ASK THAT OWAMBO BE EXCISED FROM TERRITORY.

8. NATS ALLEGE THEY HAVE NO PRECONCEIVED SOLUTION, BUT CLEARLY THEY FAVOR FEDERATION OR CONFEDERATION. TO SOME EXTENT THEIR WISH TO AVOID CREATION OF UNITARY STATE HAS BACKING OF SMALLER BLACK ETHNIC GROUPS, WHICH DO NOT WANT

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MAJORITY-RULED (OVAMBO) STATE. WHITES AND BLACKS ALIKE SAY
HOMELANDS SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT FOR BLACKS IS RULED OUT,
ALTHOUGH EACH BLACK GROUP WILL INSIST THAT SOME LAND BE SET
ASIDE FOR ITS OWN EXCLUSIVE USE. THERE WILL HAVE TO BE SOME
FORM OF SHARED POWER. NATS WILLING ACCEPT THIS IN PRINCIPLE,
AS LONG AS IN PRACTICE THERE WILL BE GUARANTEE THAT THEY WILL
BE ABLE MANAGE THEIR OWN AFFAIRS. AGAIN, THEY FAVOR A SYSTEM
IN WHICH EACH GROUP WOULD HAVE EQUAL REPRESENTATION IN CENTRAL
GOVERNMENT WITH LIMITED POWERS. EACH GROUP WOULD HAVE VETO
OVER ITS OWN FUTURE. WHITES HOPE OVAMBOS WOULD OPT FOR
SEAPARATE INDEPENDENCE.

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INR-05 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 CAPE TOWN 0818

9. IN MOVING TOWARD NEW POLITICAL DISPENSATIONAND TOWARD

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SOME RPT SOME RELAXATION IN RACIAL DISCRIMINATION, MUDGE
AND COMPANY FACE STRONG OPPOSITION FROM MANY WHITES WHO
WANT NOTHING LESS THAN CONTINUED WHITE DOMINATION. MUDGE
SAYS NATS MUST THEREFORE MOVE SLOWLY AND CAUTIOUSLY. ON THE OTHER
HAND, SWA UNITED PARTY LEADER BIRAN O'LINN AND OTHERS ARE
SKEPTICAL OF REASONS WHICH NATS CITE FOR GRADUALISM, MAINTAINING
THAT NATS WILL MOVE ONLY AS FAR AND AS FAST AS THEY ARE FORCED
TO. IN ANY EVENT, IT APPEARS THAT AS OF NOW THOSE NATS WHO
ARE PRESSING FOR CHANGE ARE NOT YET IMPELLED BY ANY SENSE OF
URGENCY AND ARE STRESSING NEED FOR CIRCUMSPECT, STEP-BY-STEP
PROCESS.
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10. IN THIS REGARD, WHILE NATS KNOW THEY WILL HAVE TO DO
SOMETHING ABOUT AT LEAST SOME DISCRININATORY PRACTICES IF
THEY ARE TO GAIN COOPERATION OF BLACKS IN ESTABLISHING NES
ORDER FOR SWA, MUDGE SAID NATIONAL PARTY MUST TAKE CARE TO
AVOID ALIENATING MAJORITY OF WHITES. REFLECTING THIS, WHEN
PRESSED TO DESCRIBE SPECIFIC CHANGES HE HAS IN MIND, HE
TALKED IN TERMS OF REMOVING "WHITES ONLY" AND "NON-WHITES"
SIGNS FROM POST OFFICES AND ELEVATORS, DESIGNATING SOME
HOTELS AS MULTIRACIAL, AND DESEGREGATING, BY SLOW STAGES,
WINDHOEK'S THEATRE. MARAIS SAID MUCH THE SAME, AND EVEN WHEN
HE REVEALED "IN CONFIDENCE" THAT SAG DEPARTMENT OF BANTU
AFFAIRS SOON WOULD MODIFY INFLUX CONTROLS IN SWA, HE
INDICATED THAT CHANGES WOULD BE QUALIFIED. FREEDOM OF
MOVEMENT WOULD BE GRANTED TO ALL BLACKS IN TERRITORY "WHO
HAVE PERMANENT ADDRESSES." STRICT INFLUX CONTROLS, MARAIS
SAID, WOULD REMAIN IN FORCE ONLY FOR MIGRANT WORKERS. HE
ADDED THAT IT WOULD BE NECESSARY FOR PEOPLE OF ONE ETHNIC
BACKGROUND TO GET PRIOR PERMISSION BEFORE ENTERING "HOMELAND"
OF ANOTHER ETHNIC GROUP. HE DID NOT EXPLAIN HOW THIS WOULD
APPLY TO BLACKS TRAVELING TO OR THROUGH AREA CONTROLLED BY
WHITES.

12. WHITES WILL PROBABLY HAVE TO DO MORE THAN THAT
ADUMBRATED BY MUDGE AND MARAIS, AND DO IT FASTER, IF THEY
ARE TO WIN EXTENT OF COOPERATION THEY WANT FROM BLACKS.
SONE, E.G., KAVANGO, EAST CAPRIVI, AND OWAMBO TRADITIONAL
LEADERS, WILL DO WHAT WHITES WANT REGARDLESS, BUT THIS WILL
FALL SHORT OF LEGITIMACY NATS WANT MULTIRACIAL TALKS TO HAVE.
AS IT STANDS NOW, DISTRUST OF WHITES IS WIDESPREAD, ESPECIALLY
AMONG YOUTHS, AND ANY PLAN PUT FORWARD BY NATIONAL PARTY IS
REGARDED WITH DEEP SUSPICION.

13. COMMENT: PRETORIA IS RELUCTANTLY BOWING BEFORE
INTERNATIONAL PRESSURES AND IS BEGINNING A PROCESS LEADING
TOWARD SOME CHANGE IN NAMIBIA. BECAUSE NAMIBIA EXPENDABLE
IN LONG RUN AND IN VIEW OF VORSTER'S APPARENTLY FELT NEED

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TO DEMONSTRATE GOOD FAITH TO AFRICAN STATES AND TO WEST,
CERTAIN MODIFICATIONS TO APARTHEID IN SWA WILL TAKE PLACE
RELATIVELY FASTER THAN IN SOUTH AFRICA ITSELF. NEVERTHELESS,
NARROW VISION, PREJUDICE, FEAR OF WHITE BACKLASH, AND
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DETERMINATION TO PROTECT WHITES FROM BLACK POLITICAL CONTROL
WILL PLACE CONSTRAINTS ON PACE OF CHANGE AND LIMITS ON
WHAT WHITE LEADERS WILL AGREE TO AS ACCEPTABLE POLITICAL,
ECONOMIC, AND TERRITORIAL ALTERATIONS. IN ATTEMPTING TO
KEEP CHANGE WITHIN CERTAIN BOUNDS, WHITES WILL BE AIDED BY
INTERNAL BLACK DISUNITY, AS LONG AS IT LASTS.

14. IF OUR ASSESSMENT IS CORRECT, IT UNLIKELY SAG IS GOING
TO CONVINCE AFRICAN STATES THAT ITS INTENTIONS ARE HONORABLE
AND THAT NAMIBIAN SETTLEMENT WILL BE JUST. CONCEIVABLY,
CONTINUED "SECRET" DIALOGUE BETWEEN SAG AND AFRICAN STATES AND
NEW INITIATIVES ON NAMIBIAN PROBLEM COULD ALTER SITUATION AND
LEAD TO MORE DRAMATIC CHANGES WITHIN TERRITROY. WITHOUT SOME
SUCH ACTION, THOUGH, NEITHER UN NOR OAU, GIVEN SWAPO'S CURRENT
INFLUENCE, WILL ACCEPT STEPS SAG TAKING OR END IT HAS IN MIND.
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